

**Kennesaw State University**  
**Social Science Research Methods**  
**SOCI 2301 01**  
**Fall 2012**

Classroom: SSB 3025	Instructor: Gail Markle, Ph.D.
Class Hours: TR 11:00 – 12:15	Office: SSB 4071
Office Hours: TR 10:00 – 10:45, 12:15-1:45, F 10:00 – 10:45	E-mail: <a href="mailto:gmarkle@kennesaw.edu">gmarkle@kennesaw.edu</a>

**Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to research design and data collection methods used in empirical research in sociology. It addresses the relationship between theoretical perspectives and research methods as well as the responsibility for conducting empirical research in an ethical manner.

**Course Prerequisite:** SOCI 2201 Principles of Sociology

**Course Goals:**

- Develop an understanding of the scientific foundations of social inquiry
- Become familiar with levels of measurement and sampling techniques
- Be able to translate abstract concepts into measurable variables
- Become familiar with basic quantitative and qualitative research methods
- Learn the basic use of (SPSS) software for analyzing numerical data
- Learn how to produce a literature review of existing research
- Learn how to design a research study applicable to specific research questions
- Develop a proposal for a sociological research study

**Textbooks:**

**All Students are expected to purchase the textbooks for this class.**

Sweet, Stephen, and Karen Grace-Martin. 2012. *Data Analysis with SPSS: A First Course in Applied Statistics, Fourth Edition*. Boston: Pearson. ISBN: 978-0-205019670.

Neuman, W. Lawrence. 2009. *Understanding Research, Value Pack SPSS*. Boston: Pearson. KSU Bookstore: ISBN: 978-0-205801244 (new); 978-0-205025206 (used).

**Class Format:** Class meetings will consist of lectures interspersed with class exercises, discussions, and other forms of class instruction.

**Expectations:** Please turn off your cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices. **NO LAPTOPS TO BE USED IN CLASS.** Students are expected to read assignments prior to the class period, to listen to class presentations, and to participate in class exercises and discussions. Please ask questions, chances are if you have a question, others do too. Critical thinking is essential to any course in research methods. Critical thinking consists of engaging with reality on four dimensions: describing phenomena; comparing, contrasting and linking ideas; assessing scientific presentations; and innovating.

**Attendance:** Regular and punctual attendance in class is required. If you must be absent please be aware that you are responsible for all announcements, assignments, and material covered during class time. **Your attendance record will affect your grade.** For perfect attendance 2 points will be added to your final grade. For 1-2 absences 1 point will be added to your grade. Beginning with the 4<sup>th</sup> absence 1 point will be deducted from your final grade. For each successive absence an additional point will be deducted from your final grade. For example, five absences would result in a 2 point deduction from your final grade; six absences would result in a 3 point deduction, and so on. Only absences for KSU business, religious holidays and mandatory court appearances may be excused if proper documentation is provided.

**Class Requirements and Grading:**

HSR Certification	5%
Exams (2 @ 20%)	40%
SPSS Project	25%
Research Proposal	30%

**Human Subjects Research Certification:** This assignment includes learning modules and quizzes on issues related to research with human subjects. The KSU Institutional Review Board is responsible for ensuring that research participants are treated ethically. The assignment requires one to two hours to complete. **Due September 6.**

1. Read the CITI Registration instructions posted on the course website.
2. Go to <https://citiprogram.org>
3. Create a personal profile with your username and password. Do not forget to add your affiliation to KSU. Your role is Student Researcher – Undergraduate.
4. Complete the Students in Research module, and the associated quiz.
5. Save a copy of the Course Completion Report with your name, and print one copy and bring it to class. The quiz score will be the grade for this assignment.

**Exams:** There will be two exams, each worth 20%. They will contain multiple choice and short answer questions from the readings, lectures, exercises and assignments preceding each exam. Exams will be given **October 4** and **December 4**. Make-up exams will only be given for exceptional cases with appropriate documentation. To be considered eligible for a make-up exam, students must contact the instructor prior to the originally scheduled exam time.

**SPSS Project:** This project consists of a series of group and individual assignments in which students design and administer a survey, code the responses and input the data into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), perform various analytical procedures, and write a brief research report. Detailed instructions will be provided. **Due November 6.**

**Research Proposal:** Students will prepare a 10-12 page research proposal on a topic of their choice. You must turn in a printed copy of your proposal topic plus a bibliography of ten potential scholarly resources on **September 13**. **You must work on this project throughout the semester.** Detailed instructions will be posted on Georgia View Vista. You are welcome to submit early drafts of your proposal as well as to meet with me to discuss any questions you may have. **Due December 4.**

Your paper must include:

- An introduction
- A problem statement and why it is worthy of study
- A theoretical perspective
- Literature review (at least **ten** academic journals or scholarly books)
- Original hypotheses
- Methodology (variables and how they will be measured, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, plan for analyzing the results)
- Reference list

**Grading Scale:** 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F

**Earning Grades:** Grades are “earned” and are not arbitrarily “granted” in this class. Thus, unless I make an error in calculation, I will not change your grade at the end of the semester for HOPE eligibility, graduation requirements, or any other reason.

**Academic Honesty:** You are required to adhere to the tenets of the Kennesaw State University Policy on Academic Honesty. This policy can be found at:

[http://www.kennesaw.edu/academicaffairs/acadpubs/acadpub/ucat2006-07/x.General\\_Policies.pdf](http://www.kennesaw.edu/academicaffairs/acadpubs/acadpub/ucat2006-07/x.General_Policies.pdf)

**If any portion of your research proposal is plagiarized you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and disciplinary action will be taken.**

**Accommodations:** This course will be conducted in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and make the appropriate arrangements with Disabled Student Support Services located in Suite 267 of the Carmichael Student Center Addition, 770-423-6443.

### SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
August 21	Introduction	Syllabus
August 23	Research in Sociology	Neuman Ch 1
August 28	The Importance of Theory	
August 30	Research Design	Neuman Ch 2
September 4	Ethics	Neuman Ch 3
September 6	Literature Review	<b>HSR Certification due</b>
September 11	Literature Review	
September 13	Sampling	Neuman Ch 4; <b>Proposal topic/refs due</b>
September 18	Sampling	
September 20	Hypotheses/ RQs	Neuman Ch5

September 25	Variables and Measurement	SG-M Ch 1
September 27	Survey Research	Neuman Ch 6
October 2	Survey Pre-test	<b>Bring three copies of your survey</b>
October 4	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>Turn in one copy of your revised survey with research question, hypotheses, independent and dependent variables</b>
October 9	Survey Distribution	<b>Bring 27 copies of your final survey</b>
October 11	Codebook, Data Entry	SG-M Ch 2
October 12	<b>Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty</b>	
October 16	Analyzing Quantitative Data	Neuman Ch 9
October 18	Univariate Analysis	SG-M Ch 3
October 23	Reliability; Constructing Variables	SG-M Ch 4
October 25	Ms of Association, Significance, Type I and Type II Errors	Review Neuman pp. 251-258
October 30	Bivariate Analysis	SG-M Ch 5
November 1	Comparing Group Means	SG-M Ch 6
November 6	Describing Quantitative Results	Neuman Ch 9, SG-M Ch 9; <b>SPSS Project Due</b>
November 8	Experiments	Neuman Ch 7
November 13	Content Analysis	Neuman Ch 8
November 15	Content Analysis	
November 20	No Class	
November 22	No Class	
November 27	Field Research/Interviewing	Neuman Ch 10
November 29	Qualitative Analysis	
December 4	<b>Exam 2</b>	<b>Research Proposal Due</b>

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.